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INFORMATION REPORT

PREPARED AND DISSEMINATED BY

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

COUNTRY

China/Hong Kong

SUBJECT

Possible Improvement of Communist China's Meteorological Work/Unavailability of Weather Data at Canton/Probable Successor to Royal Observatory Director

PLACE ACQUIRED (By source)

DATE ACQUIRED (By source)

Early 1955

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DATE OF INFORMATION (Date or dates, on or between which, events or conditions described in report existed)

Early 1955

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SOURCE

1. In early 1955 Colin Ramage of the Hong Kong Royal Observatory told me that a number of well-trained Chinese have returned to Communist China to enter the field of meteorology. He also expressed the opinion that, with this influx of new trained personnel, Communist China's meteorological service should get back on its feet provided the government allocates sufficient funds to establish the necessary network.
2. In commenting upon the inadequacy of Communist China's meteorological service, Ramage related an incident which occurred during Attlee's [UK] visit [1954]. Attlee and his group were leaving China by air from Canton bound for New Delhi, India. While in flight the pilot asked Hong Kong for a New Delhi weather forecast. Since China does not observe the international weather code and also the plane had left Canton, Ramage told the pilot to get his forecast from that city. The pilot replied that there was no such information available at Canton. Ramage observed that the reply would seem to indicate that Communist China's meteorological service is pretty much disorganized. Weather reports from New Delhi and other Southeast Asia areas are regularly broadcast by short wave and, except for the chance that Canton was having power difficulties at the time of Attlee's flight, the reports should have been available in Canton. Ramage believes that Canton has no meteorologists receiving the forecasts or organizing the weather data.
3. Ramage, who has worked at the Royal Observatory since World War II, will probably become its Director when the present Director leaves in 1955. He is an extremely capable meteorologist and probably a good administrator. He was trained at Christchurch Geophysical Observatory in New Zealand and worked in the New Zealand Weather Service until the end of World War II.

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